

The proposed rulemaking, RM-11306, by the National Association for Amateur Radio/American Radio Relay League (ARRL), blatantly lacks required substantiate evidence to support the need for their proposed changes in "the means by which the extremely varied emission modes in the Amateur Radio Service are developed, experimented with, implemented, and regularly utilized" (paragraph one). A number of significant modal, spectral and technical assertions and claims are made in the petition without documentation or statistical information to back them up. An alleged "Ad Hoc Digital Committee" was formed (by ARRL?) to advise in this matter. But its defined goals, mission, objectives, guidelines, scope of work, order of function, expertise of its membership and other key information necessary to verify its capabilities and validity are not revealed to FCC and the Public in RM-11306.

The ARRL states there is a "pronounced trend...toward digital communications" in the Amateur Service (I.,2.). Yet, no evidence of the degree of this proclaimed trend is put forth, nor are any driving forces behind any such trend identified and explained. Also detracting from their petition to push for more intensive development and use of new Amateur digital communications modes and methods, The ARRL has omitted to mention a glaring fact, i.e. the number of Amateurs engaged in serious, technically in-depth experimenting with digital modes of communication comprises a surprisingly small percentage of the total Amateur licensees. The petition leads one to believe that much serious digital experimentation and development at engineering levels is going to be an outcome of the proposed regulatory changes. Unfortunately, such technical work is far beyond the capability, *and interest*, of the predominance of today's Amateurs. It is believed that this is due, in part, to past failures and unfortunate turns of events that have dumbed-down the Amateur Service including the Incentive Licensing debacle, continued relaxing of knowledge levels necessary to pass Amateur exams, past flawed and corrupt volunteer license examinations, and the plethora of over-the-counter, "plug-and-play" but technically sophisticated radio equipment, to name a few. Whatever the reasons are for a lack of technical expertise in the ranks, the interests of the majority of Amateurs are not represented by ARRL in RM-11306. Interestingly, ARRL points to FCC's seemingly shifted perspective of the Amateur Service to being "persuaded" that "the amateur service is fundamentally a technical service" [RM-11306, I.,3., (an extract of current Part 97 Rules and Regulations)].

The ARRL correctly claims that the Commission's existing rules are insufficient to avoid conflicts in spectrum usage "between Amateurs pursuing different operating interests on-air". This is reflected again in section VI. Conclusions, 22 of the petition. At the same time, they make a delusional advocacy for resolution of conflicts primarily by voluntary actions by the Amateurs themselves [I.,2.,(c)], without spelling out how such cooperation will be effectively achieved in the totally new communication environment being envisioned, wherein emission bandwidth will govern the segmenting of the Amateur bands and operations therein. The ARRL only points to its proposed "nearly pure regime of regulation of the bands by bandwidth only" (III., 22.) as the mechanism to create harmony.

The success of conflict resolution only through voluntary cooperation is completely unknown. Certainly, voluntary actions can neither be forced nor enforced. Even the ARRL admits that it may take ten years, or more before it is known if the proposed regulatory changes will even work [I.,2.,(a.)]. Unmentioned is a serious impediment to success, that is, many of the inductees into the Amateur Radio hobby in the last ten to fifteen years have not been adequately indoctrinated in the importance, wisdom and application of self-regulation to avoid interference situations. In verification of this fact, the ARRL concedes in RM-11306 that today's Amateur Radio operators lack acceptance of voluntary self-regulation with regard to band planning [I.,2.,(c.)]. This unfortunate circumstance is proven during even a cursory monitoring of present-day operations on any of the Amateur frequency bands.

In a few paragraphs of the petition, the ARRL panders to Amateur licensees preferring to use wider, but legal, emission modes such as Double Sideband Amplitude Modulation (DSB-AM). Later, statements are made in explanatory text that the ARRL intends to "protect incumbent analog services *to a reasonable extent*" (perhaps not as much as narrowband digital services?) [III.,12.]. In 14. of section III. Bandwidth, ARRL says "There are certain incumbent Amateur operations that *should*" (not "shall") "be

allowed to continue...". In the same paragraph, they characterize the incumbent DSB-AM mode as being non-compliant with their proposed regulations. Under VI. Conclusions, it is stated that emission types including "DSB-AM" do not fit well into sub-bands divided on the basis of emission bandwidth, "but those emissions *can*" (not "should") "continue to be accommodated...". In paragraph 18. of section III., under sub-heading "3.5 kHz", they explain that this bandwidth is just not wide enough for DSB-AM "so a separate sub-paragraph is proposed to accommodate such operation as a specific exception to the general 3.5 kHz bandwidth standard". Indeed, wording to accommodate DSB-AM does appear in "Appendix A Proposed Rule Changes" in 97.307 Emission standards (f)(1), affording "A3E" emissions bandwidths up to a maximum of 9 kHz. But the tone of the text of the petition cited above, including the conspicuous use of the word "accommodated", raises question as to if an amendment or subsequent Proposed Rulemaking might follow that removes incumbent emission types, especially DSB-AM, in short order.

With the foregoing in mind, it is obvious that ARRL's RM-11306, if adopted, would deal a deadly blow to Amateur Radio, which is already straining to compete for interest with the Internet and other wide-spread, publicly accessible, electronic innovations and endeavors. The proposed rulemaking would radically change Amateur emission band plans and operations, permitting many diverse modes of communication to be intermixed, simultaneously, on frequencies throughout any one band, so long as they fall within the "maximum necessary bandwidth". This is a formula for disaster in the form of a horrific spectral "free-for-all".

The communications mêlée to follow would cause immense confusion among Amateurs of different operator classes, technical backgrounds, and operating preferences. There would be great contention between the inevitable differing factions that will subsequently arise. Routine Amateur communications would degenerate into general havoc during the fighting of "frequency wars", far worse than those that resulted from the unbridled and imprudently introduced single-sideband (SSB) mode into the Amateur telephony (voice) band segments in 1950's. (Most persons at ARRL, FCC and in the Amateur community are not old enough to remember this fiasco.)

Following the implementation of the ill-conceived RM-11306, Amateur Radio as it is known today would swirl down into a cesspool of incessant destructive radio interference, something the service will likely not survive. Communications during critical situations when Amateur Radio's emergency communications support is most needed by the public would be seriously compromised. And, FCC is ill equipped, and seriously deprived of adequate resources and staff to enforce all of the Amateur Service, all of the time. I strongly urge those at FCC with concern for the Amateur Service and, hopefully, with the benefit of knowledge from significant, first-hand experience with Amateur Radio, to advise those who will ultimately determine the disposition of RM-11306 to proceed with great caution and firm logic, investigating the merit of all divergent and revolutionary statements therein. Before swinging the axe, all possible effort should be made to determine the true intent and motivations behind a petition that circumvents reality and once again calls into question the wisdom of the American Radio Relay League and its capability to be the all-to-often unquestioned rudder that steers Amateur Radio rulemaking. "Of, by and for the Amateur" *was* their slogan.

Michael A. Carroll, Sr., W4AEE
1148 Hunters Chase Dr
Franklin, TN 37064